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ABSTRACT

This study was an attempt to determine whether or not it would be feasible and beneficial to develop behavioral objectives for use in methods classes. The subjects were 49 elementary education majors who voluntarily enrolled in the TTT Project at Indiana University. TTT is a government-funded project established for the training of teacher trainers, and involving both classes and public school practical experience. Twenty-four behavioral objectives were established and divided into three area: attitudes, knowledge, and skills. They were then judged by several social studies educators across the nation, and submitted to a doctoral seminar in social studies. The objectives were assessed several ways: attitude-by observation and attitude inventory, knowledge-by objective tests, and skills-by observation of student teaching. In October 1969, a semantic differential was administered, and included behavioral objectives as a concept. The findings indicated: that these objectives can be used in methods courses, if the term is used behaviorally; and, students prefer their use because they feel their goals are better defined, and, they are able to use a variety of teaching strategies. (Author/SBE)

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USING BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES IN TEACHING ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES METHODS FACT OR FANTASY?

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The use of behavioral objectives in the teaching of social studies methods has been argued and questioned. This study was an attempt to determine whether or not it would be feasible and beneficial to develop behavioral objectives for use in a social studies methods class. The subjects were 49 elementary education majors who voluntarily enrolled in the TTT Project at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. TTT is a government-funded project established for the training of teacher trainers. The elementary education students are the vehicle used to train cooperating teachers in the public schools, graduate students and university professors as teacher trainers. The project should provide an ideal situation for the use of behavioral objectives since the student is in a combined program of methods classes and practical experiences in the public schools which enable him to apply the methods immediately in the classroom. Twenty-four behavioral objectives were established for the social studies methods courses. They were divided into three areas: attitudes, knowledge, and skills.

The attitudinal area is interpreted as the student's attitude toward certain aspects of teaching social studies; the knowledge area

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is defined as background knowledge in methodology necessary for teaching social studies, but not the social science content; and the skills area is defined as specific teaching skills that are demonstrated in the classroom. The behavioral objectives follow:

ATTITUDE OBJECTIVES:

The student develops an awareness of the value of the social studies in translating the goals of society to children and displays this through his interest in the subject, enthusiasm and concern for planning, and the extent of emphasis placed upon the relevance of the subject matter to the children's lives.

The student exhibits an awareness that social studies includes all the social sciences as he pursues topics with children focusing on aspects of geography, history, sociology, anthropology, economics, and political science.

The student exhibits in his teaching strategies by requiring limited memorization of facts, a belief that the acquisition of knowledge is of little value unless it leads to understanding and achievement of goals.

The student exhibits interest in and sensitivity to the environmental background of the children by adjusting materials and teaching strategies to meet needs and problems.

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES:

The student will identify on a multiple-choice test at least two teaching strategies unique to the methods of problem solving

through inquiry, unit organization, conceptual framework, and teaching the disadvantaged. The student will list four of the current developing social studies national curriculum projects and enumerate five or six unique features of each and two common elements of them all.

The student will apply the curriculum analysis evaluation to one of the developing projects to determine its success in achieving the criteria.

The student will select from a list of current available materials, three or four and evaluate their effectiveness by describing how they improve the instruction for children.

The student will list and identify all sides of at least three areas of disagreement among social studies educators.

The student will select on a multiple test the unique contributions of each social science to the content of the social studies and identify techniques of inquiry that are common to each.

The student will identify the relationship of societal factors to the social studies and list how two of these factors will affect his teaching of social studies.

The student will list four characteristics of an urban educational environment that should be considered in the planning of a social studies curriculum for inner-city children.

The student will list at least two of the controversial issues from society that should be considered and list techniques that can be applied in their presentation to a class.

The student will select from a list, the three levels of questioning as outlined by Taba.

The student will rank a list of learning experiences for children according to the levels of educational objectives in the cognitive domain as hypothesized by Bloom.

SKILL OBJECTIVES:

The student will conduct an effective inquiry session creating an atmosphere that permits children to ask questions and give answers, not indicating whether an answer is right or wrong; focusing the direction of the questions toward the goal of inquiry, using motivating techniques that will encourage most children to participate, and increase children's thinking skills by including all levels of questions.

The student will assess the varying abilities of the individual children and plan their lessons to meet the needs of each. This will be accomplished by varying the materials to meet visual, auditory, or physical learning styles.

The student will select a value oriented issue related to a topic under discussion in the classroom and conduct a value decision making session with the children avoiding the expression of his opinion, motivating freedom of expression of views from children, exposing all sides of the issue, and aiding children in assessing their own values on the issue.

The student will implement a prepared unit of study by adapting it to the individual needs of the children, adjusting the materials to their reading levels, utilizing special skills of each such as research, oral, artistic, so that each child achieves minimum success on evaluative instruments.

The student will develop a teaching strategy unique to his personality which will initiate a problem solving situation so that many children can identify the problem, suggest hypotheses, test hypotheses, and arrive at possible solutions.

The student will organize the class for committee work so that each child understands his responsibility to the group and completes his task according to his ability.

The student exhibits an understanding of the value of cueing and reinforcing by supplying adequate cues when needed by children and providing continual supportive reinforcement either verbally with statements such as good, well done, etc. or non-verbally with a smile, appreciative look, or approving touch.

The student will exhibit knowledge of the importance of motivation by varying his introductory approaches to learning to achieve active participation by most children.

The student utilizes a map or globe when such tools will further understanding of a concept.

The student will act as a guide for children by establishing with them limits of behavior for constructive activities and using

children's interests and ideas in planning which will be exhibited in the children's enthusiasm for learning and their successful achievement of tasks.

The objectives were judged by several social studies educators across the nation and were submitted to a doctoral seminar in social studies. The main criticism of the objectives was that certain ones failed to be what a purest would call behavioral. It was questioned whether the objectives stated, particularly in the area of attitudes, could actually be observed in the behavior of the individuals. Also, the criterion measure for the skills area was questioned since it would be subjective. For example, in skill objective one, it could not be stated that the student would ask a specific number of questions at each of the levels . In observing the student behavior, it would be required that the observer determine whether the student had asked adequate questions at each level.

The assessment of the objectives was completed in several ways. The attitude objectives were assessed primarily by observation, however, there was an attitude inventory completed for objective number four on adaptation of materials to children's background. The knowledge objectives were assessed by the use of objective tests. Each student was permitted to complete the objective when he was prepared. There were two forms for the objective tests. The student took Form A and if he

failed the test was permitted to take Form B. If he failed the test after Form B, the objective was discussed with him to determine the area of difficulty.

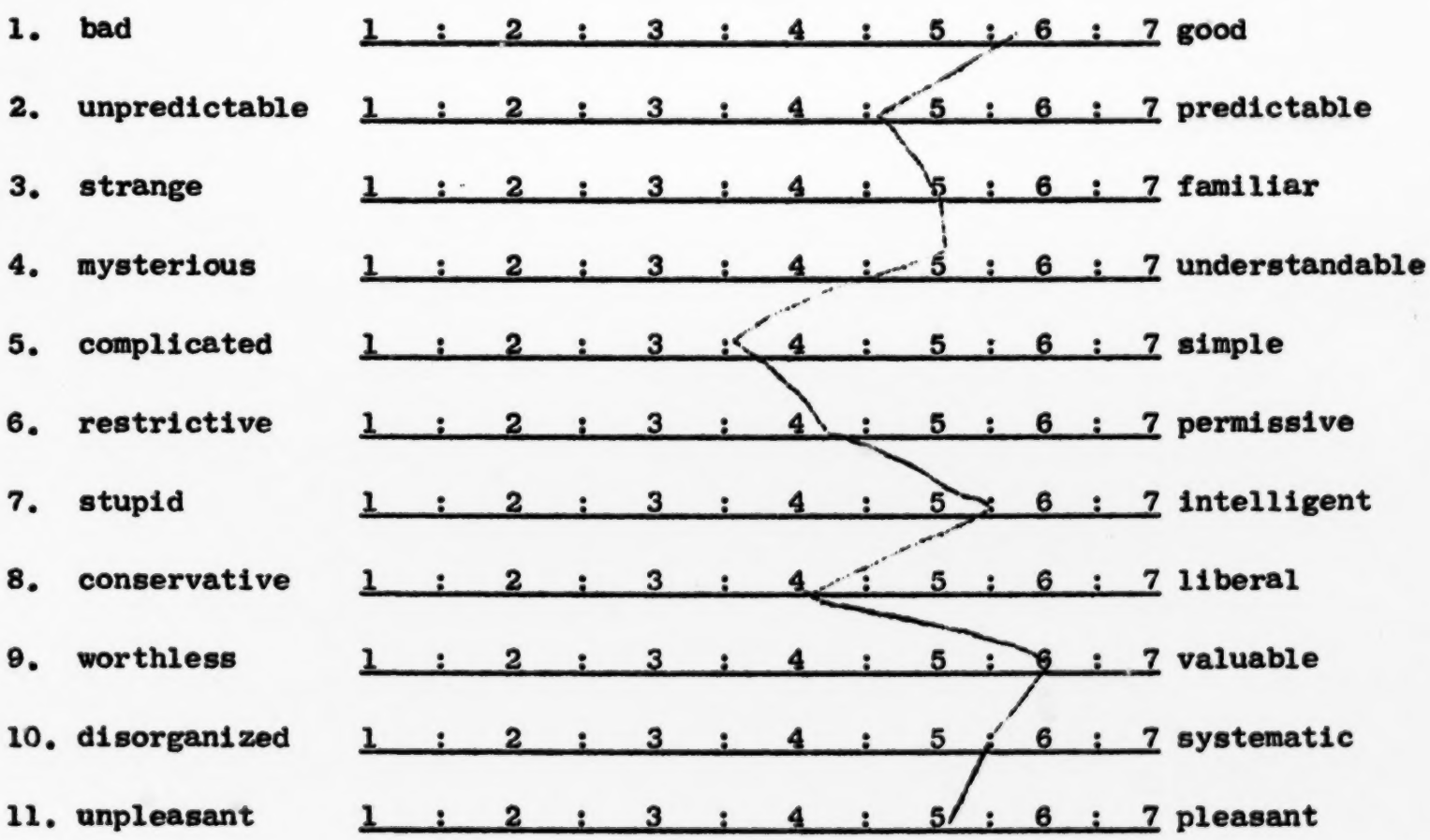
Each skill objective had a checklist which was used to observe the student as he was teaching. A sample checklist is attached. For example, objective one was the task of conducting an effective inquiry session with children; and creating an atmosphere where questions were easily asked; where the teacher asked questions at varying levels; and children expressed their own opinions, but were willing to listen to the opinions of other children. The observation checklist looked at both sides of the teaching-learning act. Was the teacher questioning adequately but also were the children benefiting from the instruction? The skill objectives were practiced in the classrooms and the student could ask to have the checklist applied to his teaching at the time he was prepared to accomplish the task.

During the first semester academic school year 1969-70, 25 of the students were participating in the social studies methods course, and the remaining 24 are currently participating. The investigator and the cooperating teachers were the observers for the students in the classrooms to check off the skill objectives. The cooperating teachers had been enrolled in a seminar class which discussed the behavioral objectives and presented video-taped teaching segments to be used for training them as observers. The checklists were applied to the tapes, discrepancies

were discussed, and closer observer agreement reached. The cooperating teachers continued to rate the items lower than the investigator. It is hypothesized that the cooperating teachers observe only one student while the investigator observes the total group and has a broader perspective. The student was permitted to try each objective as frequently as he wished, therefore, he could reach the highest level of achievement through practice.

The total TTT program has an evaluation component. In October of 1969 a semantic differential was administered which included as one of the concepts, behavioral objectives.* The results for 41 associate teachers follows:

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES


1. bad 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 good
2. unpredictable 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 predictable
3. strange 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 familiar
4. mysterious 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 understandable
5. complicated 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 simple
6. restrictive 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 permissive
7. stupid 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 intelligent
8. conservative 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 liberal
9. worthless 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 valuable
10. disorganized 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 systematic
11. unpleasant 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7 pleasant

*Dr. Rich Pugh provided the data from the semantic differential.

The overall rating of behavioral objectives was 4.97. Obviously, the students' initial reaction to behavioral objectives was positive, even though they believed them to be more complicated than simple.

It was impossible to administer the semantic differential at mid-semester to determine any change in attitudes since only half of the group had completed the social studies methods course. This data will be collected in April. To determine the first group of students' attitudes toward the use of behavioral objectives, four questions were submitted for their response.

1. Did you benefit from the use of behavioral objectives in the social studies methods course? Response: There were 21 yes,1 no.

2. What did you think was beneficial about the use of behavioral objectives? Responses:

"It spelled out in black and white what was expected of each person that helped one form a guideline."

"Behavioral objectives helped me know what to look for in any social studies program that I observed. They also helped me in establishing my own teaching strategies and techniques by serving as a basis to build upon."

"Made me try each method of teaching a social studies lesson and learn my reactions to it. Made involvement in my class deeper and more structured."

"The use of behavioral objectives enabled me to get some feedback and evaluation on what I was doing in the class which was very helpful. In other words, I already had an idea of how I wanted to be and the evaluation showed me where I was weak."

"You knew from the beginning of the course what was expected of you."

"The objectives helped me plan a lesson in general over a long period of time. That way I could draw my specific daily plans from the general ones and still know my main objective."

3. Were you better able to identify what you were trying to accomplish in a methods course by the use of behavioral objectives. Response: There were 20 yes, 2 no.

4. Do you prefer the use of behavioral objectives in a methods course? There were 21 yes, 1 I don't know.

It is obvious from the reaction of the students that they overwhelmingly favored the use of behavioral objectives. The advantages which they pointed out in planning and structuring their lessons suggest the real advantages for the use of behavioral objectives.

As an observer in the classroom, the investigator without any hard data to support the hypothesis, suggests that the teaching of social studies by this group was more effective than other methods student teachers observed. It was impossible to control the variables, since TTT students are assigned to a number of classrooms while the other students remain in one classroom for the entire semester following their methods courses. The students used more variety in their teaching

strategies, utilized questions more effectively, and generally were more structured in their approach. In other words, they knew what objectives they wanted to accomplish.

Some of the problems encountered in the implementation of the program were:

1) The difficulty of being available for observation each time the student was ready to complete one of his objectives. Videotaping was used for some of the lessons. The fact that there were only 24 people involved in the program at one time was certainly an important contribution to the success of the program.

2) The observer agreement among the cooperating teachers was not as high as would be preferred. This can be improved with more training sessions.

Conclusions drawn from the study are:

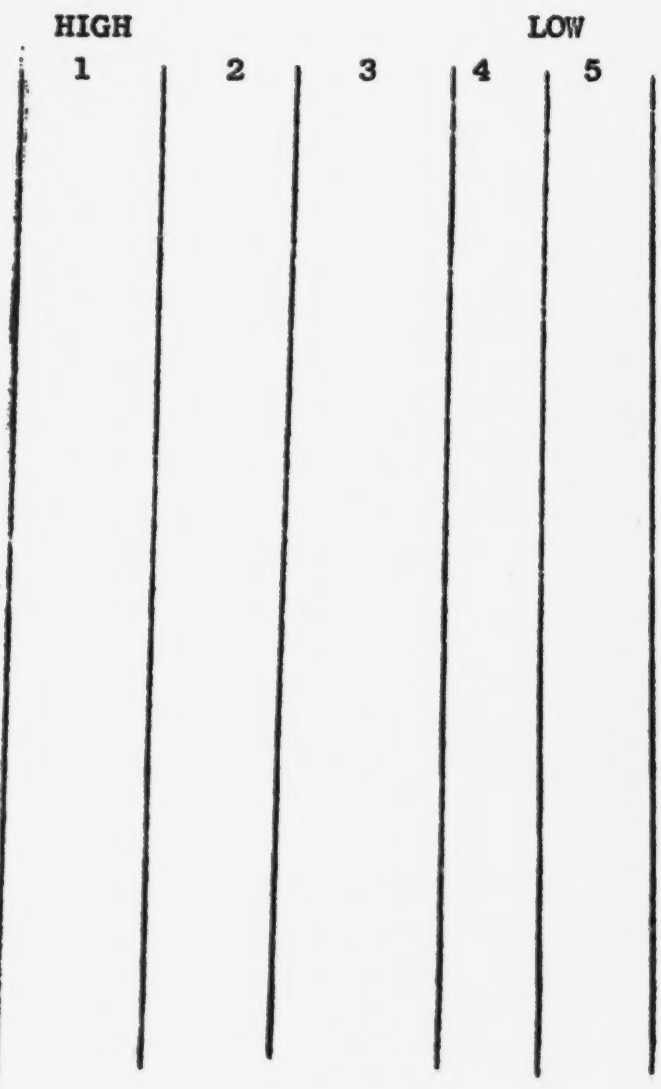
1) Behavioral objectives, if you are willing to use the term behaviorally as is indicated by the objectives presented here, can be used in methods courses. The objectives should be refined in phraseology and the checklists should also be refined and more explicit.

2) Students prefer the use of behavioral objectives since they feel their goals are better defined and they use a variety of teaching strategies. Also the students have a definite assessment of their accomplishments at the completion of such a course.

SOCIAL STUDIES METHODS

EVALUATION

Behavioral Objective: The student will conduct an effective inquiry session creating an atmosphere that permits children to ask questions and give answers, not indicating whether an answer is right or wrong; focusing the direction of the questions toward the goal of inquiry, using motivating techniques that will encourage most children's thinking skills by including all levels of questions.



1. Children ask questions freely.
2. Children suggest possible answers at all levels of questioning.
3. Children exhibit enthusiasm for tasks.
4. Teacher uses several motivating devices to encourage most children to participate.
5. Teacher formulates questions at three levels from concrete to abatract
   - information
   - interpretation
   - application
6. Teacher focuses children's questions toward goal of inquiry.

ASSCCIATE TEACHER_____

CLASS_____

DATE_____